

Message Text

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ACTION XMB-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00

AID-05 HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /044 W

-----058442 142027Z /46

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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3255

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 2374

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP PA AR EXIM

MAJOR PROJECT YACYRETA-APIPE

REF A) STATE 149841 B) BUENOS AIRES 4566

1. EMBASSY HAS A REPORT THAT AN ENVOY FROM ARGENTINE PRESIDENT VIDELA LAST WEEK CAME TO ASUNCION TO SOUND OUT PRESIDENT STROESSNER WHETHER HE WOULD ACCEPT AWARD OF TURBINE GENERATOR CONTRACT AT YACYRETA TO GROUP WHICH INCLUDED THE RUSSIANS. STROESSNER'S REPORTED ANSWER WAS "YES".

2. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, STROESSNER VIEWS HIMSELF AS A BASTION OF STRENGTH AGAINST COMMUNISM. THEREFORE THERE IS SOME SKEPTICISM HERE ABOUT THE REPORT. HOWEVER, IN THE CURRENT EMOTIONALLY ANTI-YANQUI CLIMATE AMONG PARAGUAY'S RULING GROUP, STUNG BY US EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE COUNTRY, ANTI-COMMUNISM COULD POSSIBLY TAKE A BACK SEAT TO STRIKING A BLOW AGAINST US INTERESTS. EMBASSY, HOWEVER, IS INCLINED TO THINK THAT GOP DELIBERATELY LEAKED REPORT TO US IN HOPES THAT WE WOULD REACT BY APPEALING TO STROESSNER TO KEEP THE SOVIETS OUT.

3. TEMPORARY WITHHOLDING OF APPROVAL OF REQUESTS FOR EXIM FINANCING OF PROJECTS IN ARGENTINA (VIEWED HERE AS A REFUSAL)

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IS BEING USED TO BOLSTER ARGUMENT AGAINST WESTINGHOUSE-ALLIS OFFER. ARGUMENT IS BEING MADE THAT SOVIETS CAN BE COUNTED ON TO DELIVER AND WILL BE LOW BIDDER.

4. WHETHER OR NOT STROESSNER HAS GIVEN WORD THAT HE WOULD NOT OBJECT TO SOVIET PARTICIPATION, HE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL TRY TO KEEP HIS OPTIONS OPEN. -HE, OF COURSE, HAS FINAL SAY ON PARAGUAYAN

SIDE. EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO CONFER WITH
WESTINGHOUSE-ALLIS REPRESENTATIVES ON CURRENT STATE OF PLAY.
WHITE

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